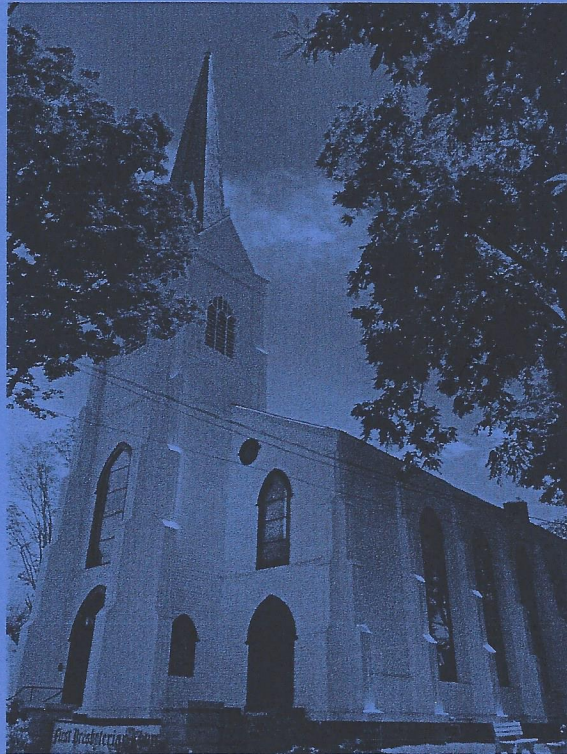


# First Presbyterian Church Of Hackettstown

2022

## ANNUAL REPORT



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## CHURCH STAFF, 2022

Pastor: Erin Hayes-Cook (Started Feb. 7, 2022)

Director of Music: Lorinda Ravo

Treasurer: Al Ravo

Financial Secretary: Deborah Gulick Shepherd

Church Secretary: Mary Lightfoot (Jan-Oct. 7, 2022)

Sexton: Elizabeth Silva

Heaven Sent Director: Jennifer Bujno

## CHURCH OFFICERS, 2022 SESSION

Clerk of Session: Donna Erickson

2022	2023	2024
Jennifer Aquino	Geof Gohlich	Bruce Bergman
Carl Erickson	Sharon Heil	Michele Cameron
Diane Hull	Dottie Kappers	MaryAnn Simmons

## DEACONS

2022	2023	2024
Ellen Bergman	Gilles Djongang	Pat Gohlich
Carol Miller	Jackie Hammel	Jeanette Hendershot
Christopher Roguso	Lorinda Ravo	Justin Simmons

## HEAVEN SENT NURSERY SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2022: Vedanira Fernandez

2023: Jen Aquino

2024: Sharon Heil

HSNS Parent: Connie Quinn

## 2022 REPORT OF THE CLERK OF THE SESSION

We were very pleased to welcome our new pastor, The Reverend Erin Hayes-Cook and her family on February 7, 2022. It has been a blessing and a pleasure to get to know Pastor Erin and to work with her as clerk. I look forward to her continued leadership.

We are grateful to The Rev. Dr. Patrick Sileo for moderating our January session meeting and to The Rev. Heather Morrison-Yaden for moderating our annual congregational meeting.

This year, session had 11 regular meetings and two called meetings (to meet prospective members) and one called congregational meeting (to elect an elder to fill a vacant seat). The annual congregational meeting was also held. All session meetings were in person although some elders attended through ZOOM.

Communion was served in person monthly and on special days.

We welcomed five new members and had two baptisms.

Three members were called to their eternal rest.

Sunday School has returned and is thriving. The confirmation class and the pre-confirmation class are doing well. Second Sunday has provided youth with a variety of activities. A new youth group has started.

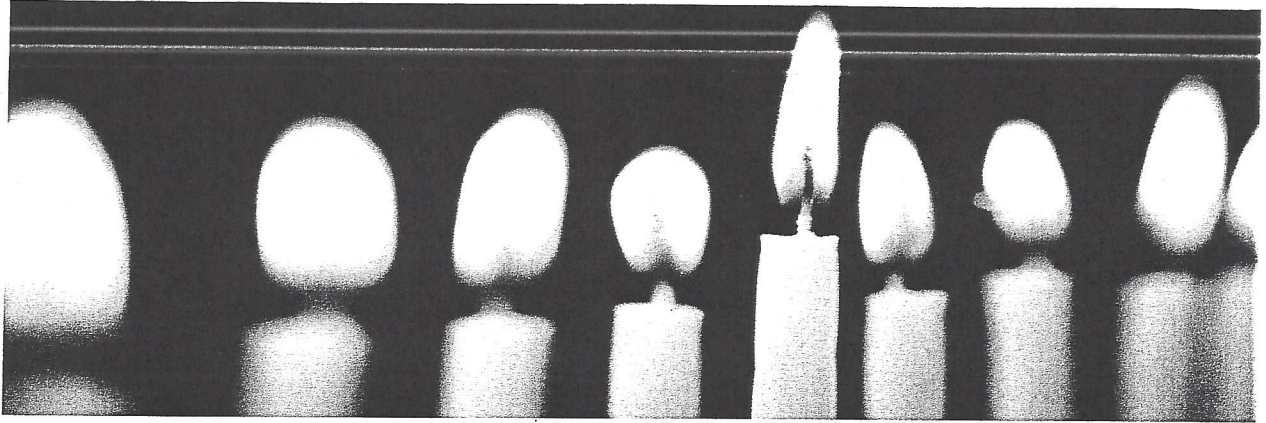
Services were held in person and virtually. A pre-recorded service was provided for Christmas Day worship.

During the year, elected commissioners and the pastor attended Presbytery of the Highlands meetings, virtually and in person. Commissioners represent this Church and can vote on any motions brought up at the meetings.

On October 16, 2022 Pastor Erin was officially installed as our pastor. We hosted a reception following the installation. We are blessed that she has chosen our Church family.

This year many of us returned to in-person worship but COVID continued to affect many. Our faith has been strong and we have continued to do God's work in our community. We look forward to 2023.





## *In Loving Memory*

2022

*Since our last congregational meeting  
January 2022, God has called to their eternal rest these  
beloved members*

*Herman Granitski*

*April 21, 2022*

*Marian Hammel*

*(friend of the church)*

*July 21, 2022*

*Jane Petty*

*October 12, 2022*

*Mary Brodt*

*November 8, 2022*

*“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord,”  
Romans 8:37-39.*

## 2022 ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT

Communicant Members as of 1/1/22----201

Increase by Profession of Faith---0

Increase by Transfer of Membership---1--- Jonathan Gohlich

Increase by Reaffirmation of Faith---4---Jayne Lambo, Cathy Hayes, Charles Prestopine and Phyllis Prestopine

Decrease by Death---3

Decrease by transfer of membership---0

Decrease by other---0

Membership as of 12/31/22----203

New Members Received in 2022----5

Baptisms in 2022---2

Arden Joesetta Cook

4/24/22 Infant daughter of Pastor Erin Hayes-Cook and Lawrence Cook

Amaari Jane Grace Djongang

7/31/22 Infant daughter of Giles and Aline Djongang



## Pastor's Annual Report 2022

What a blessing the first year of ministry has been together! I am grateful to God for the ways that God has used you over the past year to welcome my family into church life and do the important ministries of the church. My heart is filled with joy to see you hard at work to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community. What a joyous time to begin life together as the restrictions lifted and we were able to include more opportunities for our community to connect.

My prayer for 2022 was to get to know the stories of our community and hear everyone's heart. I invited people to coffee, lunch, and time on the front porch of the manse. I heard stories while visiting and connecting with our homebound members and in hospital rooms. We shared in parades and festivals and decorating the church for our many events. On Pentecost Sunday, we even took a photo of our church community on the front steps.

In addition, this past year was about finding where I might here God's invitation to us. I asked the session where is that God is leading us, where have we thrived? We shared many important discussions about what God has put in front of us.

Last February we jumped right in to welcome our new elders and deacons to the leadership. All the while we prepared for our Lenten season. Thanks to our siblings in Christ at Sanctified Art who gave us the inspiration for our "Full to the Brim" series. We hosted Bible studies in morning and evening and provided daily devotionals. The Spirit was truly at work as we gathered for Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday worship services, including the beautiful celebration for Resurrection Sunday. Attendance in worship both in person and online continued to grow over the spring, summer, and fall.

During the summer we read through the book, "In the Defense of Kindness", by Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow. Each week during worship we shared aloud where we saw kindness in the world. While we worshipped in the chapel, due to the carpet installation in the balcony, we celebrated Mr. Rogers.

The fall brought many treasured traditions as we celebrated All Saints Day, Veterans' Day and Thanksgiving. I had the pleasure in helping lead worship at Trinity United Methodist for the Ecumenical Thanksgiving worship the week of the Thanksgiving.

Our Advent season was filled with sacred music, a children's pageant and the beloved Chrismon worship service. We celebrated both new and old as we held our Christmas Eve Candlelight service in person. New this year we shared a pre-recorded worship service for Christmas day.

Thanks to the intention and work of our PR team we were able to start a connection with Centenary University. We welcomed students in worship and for our community dinners. A group of us enjoyed a woman's basketball game and potluck lunch at the University in the month of December.

I am grateful for the leadership of our church who served with joy and intention. Many of whom helped run and direct the church while waiting on a new pastor. If I were to choose a phrase to describe life together in 2022 it would be answered prayer. For we saw how God answers prayer at the right time and with the right intention. I hope we remember that as we enter into a brand new year of ministry together.

In joy,

Pastor Erin



Our Board of Deacons had a very satisfying year in 2022. We worked as a Board to find ways to provide compassionate ministry to our congregation and community.

We continued to serve our community through our well used Little Pantry, by providing free clothing at the church's Community dinners, and by helping families in need at Hatchery Hill School. We were blessed to be able to provide dinners for the Gardner family after their daughter was seriously injured in an accident, and we continued to keep in touch with our college age students and our homebound members.

It is the work of the Board of Deacons to provide both the Christmas poinsettias and Easter flowers that grace our sanctuary for the holidays, and the church looked beautiful for both services!

Throughout the summer, the Deacons held a "Fill Up the Pack and Play" with diapers and baby wipes, and filled up it was! All of the donations were used during what was surely.....

.....the highlight of our year, which had to be the return of our Free Market after being shut down for a time due to the Covid pandemic. The chapel was bursting at the seams with donations from church family and friends, and then on Saturday, it was a great joy to see those donations being so joyfully taken to their new homes. It is a couple of very long days, but with the generous help of the entire board AND other congregation members, we carried wonderful memories away from the event.

We added one last set of banners-bright and colorful summer themed banners that rounded out our collection of banners for all of the seasons. We now have banners for the front of the church to celebrate Advent, winter, Lent, Easter, spring, summer, and autumn. All the banners were funded by Memorial donations, and serve as a constant and loving reminder of those who have joined with the saints in heaven.

In the fall, the Board members created handmade Christmas ornaments featuring both a summer and winter view of our church. Under the leadership of Ellen Bergman, who designed the ornaments and taught us how to make them, we created 50 ornaments that were sold as a fundraiser. Thanks to all who supported that effort we were able to realize \$507.35 that will be added to our treasury.

In November, we welcomed the assistance of members of our Scout troop who collected food and donated it all to our Little Pantry, helping us to keep our surplus supply in the Chapel filled so that we could continue to restock the outside cabinets when they got low. We also appreciated the Scouts and our own new Youth Group's help in sorting and organizing the donations for us.

We want to thank all those who help us continue our programs and find new ways to bring the light of Christ to our friends and family, and look forward to continuing to spread that light in 2023. Respectfully submitted, Lorinda Ravo, Moderator

## **Building & Grounds 2022 Annual Report**

Due to the generosity of this congregation & friends of FPCH, 2022 was another year of upgrades and beautifying our building & grounds. Throughout the year, the following projects were completed.

### **Church:**

- Fire escape was painted and new safety netting was installed per requirement of the Hackettstown Fire Marshall. *Cost covered by church funds.*
- New carpeting was installed throughout the second floor of the sanctuary. *Funds for the carpeting were **donated** and labor for moving and reinstalling the pews were **donated**.*
- The cement pad outside the back door disintegrated. The pad was jackhammered up and a new pad was poured. ***Funds Donated.***

**Chapel:** The following items were addressed per the fire inspector. *All cost covered by church funds.*

- Fire exit signs installed throughout.
- CO2 detectors installed throughout.
- Kitchen hood inspected, cleaned and fan belt replaced.
- Extension cords removed that were improperly installed.
- Inoperable smoke detector removed.

HMUA installed a new water meter – *No cost to the church.*

New stainless-steel refrigerator purchased. ***Funds Donated.***

### **Cemetery:**

- Yearly tree maintenance completed. *Covered by church funds.*
- The cement holding the end support column together on the front wall disintegrated. The column was removed and rebuilt. ***Funds Donated.***
- An illuminated flag pole was installed. ***Funds and Labor Donated.***

**Manse:** In preparation of the arrival of our new pastor, the following work was completed.

- New granite countertops and sink were installed in the kitchen and upstairs bathroom. ***Funds Donated.***
- Installed new dishwasher – *cost covered by previous pastor.* Installed new stove - *cost covered by church funds.* Installed new refrigerator – ***Funds Donated***



- New fixtures/piping were installed in the kitchen sink, upstairs sink and tub area. *Covered by church funds.*
- Installed new storm door on master bedroom/balcony area. **Funds Donated.**
- Fixed flooring in back bedroom, molding installed upstairs hallway and kitchen, banister installed on front staircase and refrigerator nook made wider to accommodate the new refrigerator. *Cost covered by church funds.*
- New sink and vanity installed in half bath. *Cost covered by church funds.*
- Side steps for front porch installed. *Cost covered by church funds.*
- Countless hours were spent by many members completing painting, cleaning and fixing items. **Cost of all paint and brushes were donated.**
- Through the Presbytery of the Highlands Grant program 3 new windows were purchased and installed in the manse. One in the half bathroom and two in the kitchen. This is a matching program with half being *funded by Presbytery and the other half by church funds.*
- The exterior of the manse was completely repainted. **Funds Donated.**

#### **Grounds:**

- The tree by the steps to the manse and one on the uptown side of the church were removed due to decay and causing a safety risk. *Cost covered by church funds.*
- Wood from tree removal taken away. **Cost Donated.**
- Potholes in the entrance to the parking lot were fixed. **No Cost by Contractor.**

**Inspections:** All inspections were completed. Any violations were immediately addressed and cleared by the agencies.

**Work Days:** Two Work Days were conducted (one in the spring and one in the fall) sprucing up the grounds by cleaning the beds around the church and manse, cutting back brush, planting flowers and washing windows. In addition, work days were scheduled to decorate for Christmas and then remove decorations before year end.

#### **In Addition:**

- All repairs (plumbing, heating, etc..) were address as needed.
- Certificate of Insurance was obtained for all contractors.
- Message board in front of the church updated and maintained.
- Oversee cleaning contractor and order all cleaning supplies as needed.

In closing, I would like to **THANK** all those who gave of their time, talents and financial support in maintaining our beautiful building and grounds. All your efforts are not only noticed by our members but the community as well.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Diane Hull - Building & Grounds Chairperson

Mission and Outreach Committee Report for 2022

Chapel Coordinator

Hackettstown Presbyterian Church.

This has been a good year again for Mission and Outreach. Our community dinners have continued with a slow but steady growth in number of meals served. Each month we had as many as 30-50 meals served to the community. The menus have been varied and well received. Many people from a cross section of our community.

In August we received a surprise donation of the leftover food from Scout Camp Minsi. This consisted of items that they did not want to keep over during the off season. It has been a challenge trying to make different meals with these items, but it has enabled us to have such desserts as blueberry cheesecake.

The Sunday School again made cookies to be used for church activities in the second annual cookie making event.

Our scout troops, a girls troop and a boys troop and a Cup Scout pack, have also had a good year.

The chapel is getting almost daily use. Our church provides space for instrumental music groups (Stone Soup Symphony, jazz band) to practice and for twelve step groups (Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous) to meet along with the increased use by our Christian Education department

We provided 50 back packs with school supplies to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families in Warren County.

Respectfully Submitted

Carl Erickson



## Christian Education 2022 End of Year Report First Presbyterian Church Hackettstown

Christian Education at First Presbyterian Church of Hackettstown has been rewarding for both the students and the educators. We explored various new opportunities for our children in grades Pre-K through 9, as well as Bible study sessions for our adults throughout the year. Below is a breakdown of the activities that occurred during 2022 once I took on the position as session liaison to the church.

**Confirmation Class** - grades 8 and 9 - has four students who meet each week before church worship. Students focus on exploring their faith as a way to prepare for their confirmation in the Spring (May, 2023). Deb Shepherd teaches these students. Each session is held from September through May with a confirmation date of May 21st. Many of our youth from this class volunteered to work at the community dinners and various church decorating events, as well as Sunday school activities. They have also assisted as ushers during worship. Many also took part in the Christmas Eve service, serving as acolytes or greeters.

**Middle School Class** - grades 6 and 7 - has 9 students who began their endeavors in early October with MaryAnn Simmons as teacher. Five students regularly attend each Sunday and others attend when they can. Each session is held in the conference room after the children's lesson during worship until the end of the service. Students will remain in church for worship on the first Sunday of the month in order to receive communion. Pastor Erin purchased a bible study program called *Echo the Story* which provides lessons from both the Old and New Testaments with video options and journaling opportunities. Students will continue lessons through May 21st of 2023. Many of our youth from this class volunteered to work at the community dinners and various church decorating events, as well as Sunday school activities. They have also assisted as ushers or worship leaders during worship. Many also took part in the Christmas Eve service, serving as acolytes or greeters. Students in grades 5 through 8 received Bibles from Pastor Erin on September 25th.

**Sunday School** - Pre-K through grade 5 - has 16 students enrolled but has 10 students who attend regularly with Miss Donna (Annunziata) teaching the children. Students meet downstairs after the children's lesson during worship and remain until worship is over. Students met from Sept 11 through December and will continue through May 21st of 2023. Throughout the 2022 year they have learned about the stories of Creation, Adam and Eve, and Abraham, including Sarah and Lot. Highlights of their year include an Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween festivities, and the Christmas Pageant. Many of these students attend Second Sunday sessions.

**Second Sunday** - available to students in all grade levels. This activity is held on the Second Sunday of each month beginning in June (12th) and continuing throughout the year. This program began since FPCH did not have enough adult volunteers to work a common week for Vacation Bible School this summer. Attendance has been steady throughout 2022 for this program and will continue into 2023. Many students from our Confirmation class and Middle School class, when not participating, assist with the activities each month. We have many adults who conduct a number of varied activities and have a lunch crew who assists with serving a light lunch before the said activities begin.

**Youth Group** - this year we began a youth group for students in grades 6-9 under the direction of Pastor Erin and MaryAnn Simmons. The group's first meeting occurred in November and will continue in January. The group did not meet in December due to the busy schedule and events outlined for the church. In 2023, we expect to have youth group sessions once a month.

**Adult Bible Study** - We are pleased to offer Bible study opportunities to our adults in the congregation during Lent and Advent led by Pastor Erin, as well as monthly Bible study led by Ryan Van Orden.

I would like to thank all who have volunteered to teach our kids and who assist with Sunday School and Second Sunday. I would also like to thank Ryan Van Orden for his steadfast desire to host Adult Bible Study. Finally, I wish to thank Pastor Erin for her continued support in our endeavors. We at FPCH are excited to watch our programs continue to grow in 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,  
MaryAnn Simmons

## FELLOWSHIP AND NURTURE

The purpose of fellowship and nurture is to promote fellowship and encourage gatherings of the congregation, making all feel welcome.

We were able to have fellowship hour after worship most months in 2022. Some were held outside and more recently they were held in the narthex. Many people were happy to have them held in a space that did not require going down the steps.

With continuing concern from COVID, we did not have our annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner, or our summer potluck brunches in the Chapel, although we did have fellowship there one of the Sundays we worshipped in the Chapel. We did have a Christmas dinner which was combined with our December Free Community Dinner.

The ladies have also begun their PLEFF (Presbyterian Ladies Enjoying Fun and Fellowship) dinners.

We all look forward to 2023 and hope that we will be able to have more fellowship.

Thanks to all who helped with fellowship throughout 2022---Winnie Slachetka, Grace Clegg, Ellen Bergman, Kathy Maier, Haeja Kim, MaryAnn Simmons, Della Irby and Maria Koskulics

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Erickson



## Nominating Committee – 2022 Annual Report

The nominating committee members are elected by the congregation to provide candidates to serve in various leadership positions of the church.

The nominating committee recommends the following people for the upcoming year:

### Session – Class of 2025

Donna Erickson

Diane Hull

Ray Sookhoo

### Deacons – Class of 2025

Ellen Bergman

Pat Butts

Carol Miller

### Personnel Committee – 1 year term

Jan Courtright

Pam Venturini

### Nominating Committee – 1 year term

Torey Ravo

### Heaven Sent – congregation member:

Ved Fernandez

On behalf of the nominating committee, thank you to everyone who agreed to serve in these roles.

Respectfully submitted,

Jen Aquino

Jen Aquino, Chair

## Personnel Committee – 2022 Annual Report

Personnel Committee Members – 2022

Sharon Heil – Session Chair

Bruce Bergman – Session Representative

Justin Simmons – Deacon Representative

Jan Courtright – Congregational Representative

Bev Saunders – Congregational Representative

The mission of the personnel committee is to oversee the church staff and their annual reviews, fill staff positions when they become vacant, evaluate and update job descriptions, as well as recommend cost of living adjustments.

This committee worked very closely with Pastor Erin considering and implementing all aspects of its duties.

This year each FPCH staff member including the director of Heaven Sent Nursery School completed a self – review. These reviews will be used in meetings with teams of personnel members for discussions in 2023. The idea is to appreciate and support our staff in any way possible. Cost of Living Adjustments were discussed at great length by the personnel committee. It was determined that all staff will receive a 2% COLA and Pastor Erin will receive 1% COLA. Al Ravo supplied the committee with financial information as to how these figures will impact the church budget. With this information the Session approved these increases for 2023.

A sub- committee of the personnel committee along with a Session member and the church lawyer were given the task of updating the Sponsorship Agreement between FPCH and Heaven Sent Nursery School. In updating this document the director of Heaven Sent is recognized as a staff member of FPCH with a newly written contract called a Memorandum of Understanding. Therefore, this position will be reviewed by the personnel committee in the future but the director's salary is determined by the Heaven Sent Board of Trustees based on the school's budget.

On October 7, 2022 Mary Lightfoot resigned as our office administrator. This caused the committee to review the job description and responsibilities for this position and to clarify paid time off days. The Session approved the revised job description which details responsibilities and paid time off days. An Intent to Hire Agreement was written in consultation with our church lawyer and will be submitted to the Session for approval in January, 2023. Thank you to Bev Saunders, Kathy Maier, Pam Venturini, Lorinda Ravo and Peggy Russack for volunteering to work in the office one day a week until we hire a new office administrator. Also, thank you to Pat Butts, Pam Covert, Diane Hull and Jan Courtright for volunteering to substitute when necessary. With these ladies help the office is continuing to run efficiently. The search for an officer administrator continues so if anyone has any leads or suggestions please contact a committee member

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Heil, Session Chair

## **Public Relations Committee Annual Report 2022**

**Members:** Michele Cameron (Chair), Jan Courtright (Secretary)  
Richard Gregory, Al Ravo, and Lorinda Ravo

### **A look at the first year:**

It had been many years since FPCH had a Publicity Committee. 2022 marked a new beginning and the reimagined Public Relations Committee was created. We had a lot of work ahead of us.

In the forefront was creating a better relationship with the community around us. Second, was creating ways to communicate with the congregation and the community around us more affectively.

### **Our Community Dinners**

We became involved with our monthly community dinners. We created large banners for advertising, Facebook ads and have a presence during the meal. The advertising was themed to create awareness and familiarity, "Around-the-Table Community Dinners."

### **Hackettstown High School**

We became the sole religious organization to advertise on the t-shirt fundraiser hosted by the high school music department.

### **Memorial Day Parade**

This year in addition to our float we held walk-through tours of First Presbyterian Church and handed parade goers bags with our logo and our very first edition of the Presbyterian Post.

### **WRNJ**

Currently Hackettstown radio station WRNJ is announcing press releases on air that we produce. They have also interviewed Pastor Erin twice in the last few months.

### **Hackettstown BID**

We have been creating a closer relationship with the town business improvement district. We communicate often with the HBID director. We participated and became a sponsor of the annual Scarecrow event in October. They in turn donated \$450 to our "Little Pantry."

### **Centenary University**

We have been creating a partnership with Centenary University that has given us many opportunities. First, they have been supplying student volunteers for our Around-the-Table Community Dinners. Second, they have announced they are eager to partner with us as a valuable tool for the community and the students. Lastly, as 2023 progresses we will have more opportunity to engage with the students and faculty as partners where we are gaining



tremendous visibility on their social media, website, and flyers for upcoming events throughout the year.

### **WNTI**

Started communications with WNTI at the end of 2022, an internet radio station for Centenary University students and the greater Hackettstown area. Currently, we are in discussion to create a PSA with Pastor Erin and working on interview airtime. We feel it is important for the students to know that faith can be found with us when they are away from home.

### **Social Media**

During 2022 we expanded our reach by posting our events on websites outside of the FPCH Facebook page.

### **A look at 2023:**

- While we will continue to foster and strengthen community relationships, we will also find creative ways to build new relationships.
- A new website: The new website will hopefully go live in February. Having a new website will allow us the correct format to add additional social media platforms for visibility and engagement.
- Photos are an extremely powerful marketing tool; we will expand on photo taking at all our events throughout the year.
- We will expand on social media strategies and management by looking at engagement and determining what's working and what's not, when we have the analytics...
- Continue to advertise our events and possibly utilize FB ads, campaigns, and other online strategies to attract visitors. ROI: This must be funded by earning first.
- We will be leveraging our "Giving Button" in new ways that will allow online visitors to donate easily and frequently. This includes creating a way for people to donate while watching streamed services.
- Local real estate offices will be receiving our church bags with information for new residents.
- Design an Intern program utilizing our partnership with Centenary's Communications department and possibly the high school. This would help us in our social media, video camera and photography tasks.
- Stay open to new opportunities as they arise throughout the coming year. The goal of the public relations committee is to share with our community and the communities around us how wonderful FPCH is and to serve the church by communicating everything in God's will.

## **Internet and Social Media Annual Report – 2022**

### **Church Website - [www.fpchackettstown.org](http://www.fpchackettstown.org)**

The information and features found on the website include:

- Church and community activities along with meetings taking place in our buildings.
- Heaven Sent Nursery School information, forms, calendars, and pictures.
- The ability to make online donations for regular offerings or toward special projects using checking accounts, savings accounts or credit cards.
- The current and previous 11 issues of the 'Light from Steeple' monthly church newsletters.
- Contact information and lists of the church staff and members on the various church boards and committees.
- The ability to contact the church through the website asking for various types of information such as weddings, ancestors who may have been on the roles as members, Heaven Sent Nursery School inquires, etc.
- Monthly calendars of events.
- A gallery with pictures and videos of worship services and church activities.

Anyone who has information, updates or digital photos for the website, please send them to [alpravo@gmail.com](mailto:alpravo@gmail.com).

A new website will be launched in the first quarter of 2023. Additional social media platforms are also planned to be launched in 2023.

### **Church Facebook Page – First Presbyterian Church Hackettstown**

The church Facebook page provides:

- Online streaming of worship services and special events.
- Pictures of recent events, activities, services and projects.
- Announcements of upcoming events, activities and services.
- Inspirational messages and words of wisdom.
- Humorous pictures and cartoons.
- Videos and music of the FPCH Ringers Chime Choir, the Joyful Noise Bell Choir and the Unity Chimers Chime Choir.

Anyone with information to appear on the Facebook page or digital photos of recent activities or events, please send them to [lorinda.ravo@gmail.com](mailto:lorinda.ravo@gmail.com)

Respectfully submitted,  
Lorinda and Al Ravo

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

FINAL REPORT – 2022

COMMITTEE LIASON: BRUCE BERGMAN

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: CHUCK POTTER, RYAN VAN ORDEN

In September, I began preparing for pledge month which runs approximately from October 20 to November 20. We set November 20 to be Pledge Sunday when parishioners would bring their pledge cards to Church. The following preparations were put in place:

1. Contacted former committee member Michelle Cameron who agreed to once again print out the pledge cards. She did produce those later in October. Job well done.
2. All committee members sat down with Pastor Erin and reviewed the church membership lists. We were looking for additions, deletions, and special considerations. Chuck and Ryan were especially helpful.
3. Pastor Erin had been working on a special theme for the campaign based on scripture—The Lord's ability to take a little and mushroom that into a lot of good things.
4. Pastor Erin, Ryan and Bruce came up with sample letters to send to members. Pastor Erin combined the ideas and came up with a final letter. We also came up with a modified letter to send out to members with special circumstances.
5. I gathered a group of hardworking talented members to stuff and stamp envelopes with the letter and pledge card (Chuck Potter, Pat Butts, Jackie Hammel, Bev Saunders, Kathy Maier and myself).
6. Ryan Van Orden and myself made short presentations to the congregation on November 6 and 13 while Erin weaved a stewardship message during her pastoral prayers and messages during the entire period.
7. Pledge cards have been coming in and the count as of January 1, 2023 is 61 families have pledged \$88,150.
8. Offering envelopes have been and will be available from mid December into January in the back of the sanctuary.

The Stewardship Committee is looking for one or two congregation members to join our committee. See myself, Pastor Erin, Ryan or Chuck if interested. In the new year, the Session in general and the Stewardship committee hope to get more involved in new fundraising projects. On behalf of the Session, the Stewardship committee thanks you for your pledges and hopes everyone has a wonderful, safe, and productive new year.

Respectfully submitted, Bruce Bergman



# Worship Committee 2022 Annual Report

We would like to thank the Committee Members:

Lorinda Ravo – Director of Music

Kim Newton – Head Usher

Ellen Bergman – Greeters

Winnie Slachetka – Congregation Rep

Pam Venturini – Camera Operator and Secretary

## Accomplishments:

Planned and provided for our traditional, inspiring Sunday and Special Worship Services.

Monthly communions have been provided by Session and Deacon members.

Adapted opening policies to keep all members safe during COVID.

Provided Livestreaming of our Services to members and the public at home.

Planned for communions, baptisms and weddings.

Provided for an excellent Pulpit Supply to preach and Worship Leaders to read Scripture at our Services. A special thank you to our Church members who have preached and led worship for several months before Pastor Erin's arrival.

A special thank you to our Senior and Children's Choirs, Bells and Chime Ringers, the Upward Wind Ensemble and Soloists who have enriched our Services.

Thank you to: Rev Jeanette Hile and Rev Bruce Schundler.

Thank you to all who have assisted in our worship services this year, including worship leaders, bell ringers, greeters, musicians, camera operators, ushers and many others.

We have planned for and set up decorations with the Deacons for many Special Services:

Maundy Thursday and Easter

Advent and Christmas

Veterans Day

Souper Bowl of Caring

Worldwide Communion

Pentecost

Thanksgiving

Rev Erin Hayes-Cook installation

Lent

Thank you to Rev Erin Hayes-Cook for her leadership and inspirational sermons. We are growing in members and new programs for the Glory of God.

Geoffrey Gohlich

Worship Committee Chairman

## **2022 YARN GIRLS REPORT**

The Yarn Girls, a comfort shawl ministry of the First Presbyterian Church, was able to give 4 lap robes, 7 shawls, 1 baptismal blanket, and 8 pocket crosses to a variety of recipients this past year.

We began meeting again in person in January. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month. The attendance has been irregular but has averaged 3 members per meeting. The following have participated during 2022: Sandy Archer, Ellen Bergman, Grace Clegg, Sharon Heil, Kathy Maier, Brielle Plumbo, Ginny Plumbo, Beverly Saunders, Rita Schedel, and Muriel Stellingwerf.

We welcome all who wish to join us no matter what your skill level may be. We have patterns, needles and hooks, and yarn available. If you wish to learn knitting or crocheting, but cannot attend our regular meetings, we can find a mutually agreeable time for lessons.

We are supported by the Board of Deacons as part of their compassionate ministry. It is important that each member of the congregation realizes that they may request one of our creations for anyone they know who might benefit from this ministry. The lap robes and shawls are given for those with health issues, those in mourning, or those suffering from life's traumas. Pocket crosses are available at any time for anyone. Our gifts are for the congregation and their families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers.

Please consider being a part of this ministry.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deborah Gulick Shepherd, coordinator of FPCH Yarn Girls

## **2022 CHURCH HISTORIAN REPORT**

This year I was able to complete a years-long project of transcribing the available handwritten registers through 1969. There are binders with members, baptisms, marriages, and deaths. The very first Session book has been lost since the 1800s. The information listed in the registers depended greatly on who was entering the information which was at times the minister and at times the Clerk of Session. I have yet to find a definitive listing of the burials in our cemetery made by the church. The account made by the DAR during the last century only lists a fraction of the burials as those recordings had to go by legible headstones.

As always, if anyone is cleaning out papers or photos related to our church, please consider donating them to the church archives.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deborah Gulick Shepherd, FPCH Historian



## FPCH MUSIC DEPARTMENT

2022 was a year that continued to challenge us to find new ways to do the former things that we took for granted. We rejoiced that we were able to sing again, both as a congregation and as a choir. When the Senior Choir finally returned to the choir loft in March, it was a joy for us all to sing again, and for the congregation who showed us their appreciation of our efforts. We continued to provide choral anthems through June, and then took our regular summer hiatus as guest musicians provided anthems. We were so grateful to have Kate & Paul Sobolewski, Deb Shepherd, Torey Ravo, Michelle Littwin, and Ved Fernandez provide music throughout the summer months.

The Senior Choir returned in September, and in October, we created our first "Intergenerational Installation Choir", inviting others to join us for the joyful service of Installation for Pastor Erin. That idea also carried over into our "Christmas Choir" that was part of the prerecorded Christmas Day service, as were all of our other ensembles and a lovely violin solo from Ved Fernandez.

Our FPCH Ringers Chime choir also was able to continue ringing throughout 2022, and we welcomed several new members, even as our experienced ringers continued to ring. They provide an anthem about once a month, and their musical growth shows in all of their pieces.

The young people of our church family are also part of the music program. Our Joyful Noise Bell Choir gives our youngest children a chance to begin to learn to be part of a group, and to perform in front of the congregation. The Unity Chimes is for older kids, and their music is more challenging, and they do a wonderful job of providing music for our services.

The Upward Ensemble played in the spring. This group is made up of Middle School band musicians, along with some of our adults who have dusted off their instruments, and join in to help the kids. We look forward to bringing this group back in the coming months.

Finally, our Little Lights Sunday School choir sang throughout 2022, and in the fall, they began a journey around the world where they are learning about other countries, their culture, and their music. We were even able to include their lively piece "Siyahamba" in Pastor Erin's installation service!

I am so grateful to all who share their talents, and to a congregation that supports all of our musicians. I am especially grateful to Charles Lee who graciously substitutes for me-sometimes with very short notice.

I continue to feel very fortunate to serve as the Director of Music for our church. As I have said in past years, serving this church and God has been a blessing for me, and I welcome the constant support of this congregation, the musicians in the vocal and instrumental choirs, and the assistance of so many who help to make our music program work.



It is certainly a big commitment to be a part of the music program at a church, but the benefits and fellowship are repaid many times over. We are grateful that our music ensembles have returned, and invite any of you who might consider adding your talents to ours to come to just one rehearsal to see if you feel comfortable! You'll be warmly welcomed with open arms: and by the way, being able to read music or sing solos, or even audition aren't necessary. As the Psalmist says: "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!"

Respectfully submitted,  
Lorinda Ravo

# Heaven Sent Nursery School 2022 Annual Report

Greetings from Heaven Sent Nursery School. If I were to describe this past year in one word, that word would be 'recovery'. We have spent the last year recovering from all of the disruption that the recent pandemic has caused us to experience over the last 2.5 years. In March of 2022, the mask mandates were lifted and the pandemic protocols lessened. We enjoyed feeling the relief of the mandates and seeing all of our faces. Most of all, we enjoyed ending our school year with a beautiful and normal Heaven Sent Closing Program. We were able to have as many people as we wanted to join us to celebrate our students who were moving on to their next adventure. We treasured every minute of that Closing Program.

As we entered into our 2022-2023 school year, the NJ Licensing Department dropped all of the Covid protocols for childcare centers and gave us the ability to maintain our own illness policy. Covid will now be considered a communicable disease on par with the flu, strep, RSV, etc. We continue to not have to trace any contacts or quarantine if exposed. We developed an illness policy that aligned with nearby nursery schools and has similar components to the Hackettstown School District. We continue to do our best to keep: our school clean, anyone who is ill home, and our environment safe and healthy.

As every school year brings some kind of change, the 2022-2023 school was no different. Even though we were blessed to be returning to pre-pandemic routine, this year was to bring a change in staff. Mrs. Mary Cash gave her notice of retiring in January, as well as Mrs. Rachel Cruzan requesting to be placed in a teacher's assistant roll instead of a teacher roll for the remainder of this school year. It was a process of a lot of prayer and seeking in all directions for the right people to fill these positions. In November, the Board of Trustees approved Joanne Taglienti to switch positions with Rachel Cruzan. Joanne is now acting as lead teacher in their class with Rachel assisting. After the New Year, the Board of Trustees approved Mrs. Kate Doyle to replace Mary Cash. Kate will be the lead teacher with Chrissy Farrell assisting. We will miss Mary Cash deeply, as she has enriched our school with her love and gentle teaching. She will leave marks in all of our hearts and I am thankful for the time we had to share in the blessing of this ministry. I am happy to welcome Kate Doyle into our school family and look forward to working with her.

As we enter into the 2023 year, we are two spots away from full enrollment for this current school year. For the 2023-2024 school year we have 46 available spots filled out of our 56 spots. We are thankful for how God provides.

I lastly want to thank the church community for supporting us and showing us love. I want to thank our Board of Trustee family who are always there for our school at the drop of a hat. Your wisdom and support is worth more than gold to me. Thank you for your time and efforts. I am very thankful that God brought you into this leadership for such a time as this.

As we all press on into the 2023 year, I am filled with appreciation of what we have been given and filled with anticipation what the God will bring us.

Blessings,

Jennifer Bujno  
Director